



# Fit Business Tips of the Month

## APRIL

Spring is in the air! With the warmer weather comes a greater selection of fresh fruits and vegetables and opportunities for physical activity. This a great time of year to visit your local farmers' market, take a walk to smell the blooming flowers, or even hop on your bike for an afternoon ride. This month's fruit and vegetable of the month—strawberries and asparagus, should be readily available in grocery stores, farmers' markets, and at produce stands for your enjoyment. Be sure to take advantage of this great California-grown produce!

### QUICK AND SIMPLE TIPS

**Dump Liquid Calories** Sodas, fruit drinks, and sports drinks are all full of sugar, have zero nutritional value, and cost money. Instead drink zero-calorie, 100% healthy water for free. Don't like the taste of plain water? Try adding a squeeze of fresh lemon or lime for a little extra zip. Or make 100% fruit juice ice cubes and add those to your water for an extra splash of flavor.

**Get Recognized** Does your worksite go the extra mile to keep you healthy? Worksites are an important part of improving the health of Californians and we want to recognize your efforts! The California Task Force on Youth and Workplace Wellness is now accepting applications for its annual Fit Business Award. For more information and to apply, visit [www.wellnesstaskforce.org](http://www.wellnesstaskforce.org).





# April's Fruit of the Month

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## STRAWBERRIES

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### Fun Fact

If all of the strawberries grown in California this year were placed berry to berry, they would wrap around the world 15 times!

### Health Benefits

Strawberries are nutrition superstars! Aside from being low in calories and fat, these sweet, red berries are naturally packed with fiber, vitamin C, folate, and potassium. Including strawberries in your low-fat diet, along with a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables, will help you to improve heart health and reduce your risk of some cancers.

### Selection

Strawberries are a spring and summertime favorite. Look for plump berries with a natural shine, rich red color, bright green caps, and a sweet smell. Avoid bruised, moldy, or soft berries with green or white tips. Staining at the bottom of the container may be a sign of overripe or rotting fruit. Strawberries do not ripen after harvest, so be sure to pick strawberries that look ripe and ready to eat.

### Storage

Strawberries can be stored in the crisper section of the refrigerator for a few days after purchase. Do not wash the berries until you plan to eat them—extra moisture on the berries makes them spoil faster.

### Preparation Ideas

Fresh, frozen, or dried, eaten alone, or tossed into cereal, salads, or yogurt, strawberries add extra flavor and nutritional value to an ordinary meal or snack.

## FEATURED STRAWBERRY RECIPE: FRESH FRUIT CREPES

### Ingredients

#### Fruit Topping

- ¼ cup brown sugar
- juice of 1 lime
- 2 cups sliced fresh strawberries
- ½ cup fresh blueberries

#### Crepes

- 1 cup low-fat ricotta cheese
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- 6 flour tortillas (6-inch)
- nonfat cooking spray

### Preparation

1. Combine brown sugar and lime juice with strawberries and blueberries in a small bowl.
2. Stir to dissolve sugar and set aside.
3. To prepare crepes, combine ricotta, brown sugar, and cinnamon in a small bowl.
4. Spoon an even amount of mixture on half of each tortilla; fold over to enclose filling.
5. Spray large skillet with nonfat cooking spray, and place over medium heat.
6. Place 3 of the filled tortillas in skillet and cook for several minutes on each side until crisp and lightly browned.
7. Set aside cooked tortillas and repeat with remaining tortillas.
8. Spoon fruit topping over crepes and serve while hot.

*Makes 6 servings.*

### Nutrition Information Per Serving

Calories 230, Carbohydrate 36g, Protein 8g, Total Fat 6g,  
Saturated Fat 2g, Cholesterol 13mg, Sodium 225mg, Dietary Fiber 3g

Recipe courtesy of the *California 5 a Day Campaign*.





# April's Vegetable of the Month

## ASPARAGUS

### Fun Fact

Asparagus plants are perennials, which means the same asparagus plant will produce spears year after year. In fact, one plant may produce spears for up to 25 years!

### Health Benefits

Asparagus is a low-calorie, low-sodium source of vitamins A and B6. Including asparagus in your low-fat diet, along with a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables, will help to improve vision health, lower your risk of heart disease and some cancers, as well as slow the effects of aging.

### Selection

Asparagus can be found in green and white varieties. Green asparagus however, is more common in the U.S. than the white variety. When buying asparagus, be sure to look for bright green stalks that have closed and compact tips. Stalks with a narrow diameter are typically more tender than the thicker ones.

### Storage

Store asparagus with the bottoms wrapped in a damp paper towel in the crisper section of the refrigerator. It is best to eat asparagus the day it is purchased because the flavor lessens with each passing day.

### Preparation Ideas

Asparagus grows close to the ground, so sand and dirt often get stuck in its tips. Be sure to rinse asparagus thoroughly in cool water before use. The bottom of the asparagus stalk is usually pretty tough, but if you bend the stalks in half, they will snap at their natural breaking point. The thick, woody end can be used to add flavor and texture to soups and stews, while the tips are best stir-fried, steamed, roasted, or grilled. Asparagus can also be served cold with your favorite salad or as a simple side dish with lemon juice.

## FEATURED ASPARAGUS RECIPE: ROASTED ASPARAGUS

### Ingredients

- 1 pound asparagus
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon fresh parmesan cheese

### Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Wash and break off the tough ends of the asparagus.
3. Place asparagus on a cookie sheet and drizzle with olive oil.
4. Bake for 15-20 minutes until tender and crisp.
5. Sprinkle asparagus with parmesan cheese and return to the oven for 5 minutes.
6. Serve warm.

*Makes 4 servings.*

### Nutrition Information Per Serving

Calories 40, Carbohydrate 5g, Protein 3g, Total Fat 2g, Saturated Fat 0.5g, Cholesterol 1mg, Sodium 25 mg, Dietary Fiber 2g

Recipe courtesy of *Recipezaar.com*.

